SOME OBSERVATIONS Made upon the Root CASSUMMUNIAR, Called otherwise RYSAGONE,

Imported from the *East-Indies*.

SHEWING

Its Nature and Virtues, and its Usefulness above others as yet written of, in Apoplexies, Convulsions, Fits of the Mother, the Griping of the Gutts, with probable conjectures of its Fitness to Cure many other Distempers; and its being the most proper Corrector of the Jesuits Powder, rendring that Med[illegible] and Harmless.

By JOHN PEACHIE, Doctor of Physick.

Φιλοσοφίας ἐπιθυμεῖς, παρασκευάζου ἀντόθεν ὡς καταγελασθησομένων, καταμωκησομένων σου πολλῶν. *Epictetus.*

LONDON,

Printed for *Tho. Parkhurst*, at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns*, at the Lower end of *Cheapside*. 1679.

4.

TO THE

Right Worſhipfull

Sir Jonathan Keate,

BARONET:

A True Patron of Piety,

Vertue and Learning.

J. P.

Humbly dedicateth the Enſuing Obſervations, in teſtimony of his grateful reſentment of his Favours, with apprecation of all Grace and Happineſs.

OF THE

VERTUES OF Caſſummuniar.

TO give a Deſcription of the Herb, its place, its growth, whether it beareth any flower, or Seed, is not in my power, having received no account along with it from my Brother, Factor to the Honorable the *Eaſt-Indy* Company: Only thus much is moſt certain, it is a Plant eſteemed even by Princes themſelves, ſome part of what I have, being taken out of the King of *Golcondies* Garden, one of the greateſt, and wealthieſt Princes in *India*, and the Prieſts, who are the *Brackmannes*, of the *Pythagorean* Sect of Philoſophers, do many and great Cures with it, for which they are ſo much eſteemed not only by the Natives, but alſo forreign Merchants

that

that reſide there, the Engliſh themſelves preferring them before their own Country men, when they labour under thoſe diſeaſes that reign in the *Eaſt-Indys*. They are very excellent Botaniſts, admirably skilled in the nature, and uſe of Plants, and having an extraordinary variety of them have improved Galenical Phyſick to a very great height. I do not underſtand that they are acquainted with any of the Chymical waies of ſeparating the pure, from the impure parts: or underſtand the uſe of Minerals: but as they are nouriſhed by the produce of the Earth, ſo they are cured by the off-ſpring thereof, not feeding upon any animal killed for their uſe, fearing they ſhould eat ſome of their Anceſtors; becauſe they hold a tranſmigration of ſouls. This root though it might ſerve to aromatize their diet, and is certainly a good ſtomachical, yet they uſe it only medicinally, and that in ſo homely a way as is becoming ſuch plain, and ſimple men, unacquainted with the Confectioners or Apothecarys Art; they cut the Root tranſverſe, or croſs-waies, and having ſo done, they dry it in the Sun with great care, and when they have occaſion to uſe it, grind it betwixt two ſtones, adding water to it, after the manner of Painters grinding their Colours: being reduced hereby into the conſiſtency of an Electuary they adminiſter two or three drams of it at a time to their patients.

As to its qualities it is moderately hot, and very aſtringent, it conſiſteth of very fine parts, wrapped up in, and tied to an earthy matter; and may be reckoned amongſt your Aromata or Spices. It exceedingly recruiteth the animal and vital Spirits, and may well be imagined by its taſte, colour, and ſmell, to be an aperitive medicine. But by the experience I have had of it, I find it admirably to agree with the animal ſpirits,

and

and a proper remedy againſt their irregularities With Spirit of wine I have drawn a good Spirit from it, and with the remaining *fæces* made a very good extract, and conceive its extract made with fountain-water, might be better than the powder in the bloody flux, for which it is an excellent remedy. The Spirit is good to mix with cordials, and is a very good medicine outwardly uſed: and will lay ſcents better than any thing yet found out.

It is matter of no ſmall grief and trouble to any perſon endowed with pitty or compaſſion, to ſee how many perſons labour under Apoplexies, Falling-ſickneſſes, Convulſions, and convulſive-motions, Fits of the Mother, which diſeaſes have ſuch ſtupendious ſymptomes, that they do aſtoniſh the beholders, Nature ſeeming to be in an earth-quake, and in its laſt agony: and by the frequent aggreſs of ſo dreadful a Diſtemper, thoſe endowments which diſtinguiſh us from irrational creatures are in a great meaſure loſt; our underſtanding, that great Light very much darkned our memory, that excellent Repoſitory, broken, and like a Sieve lets through moſt, if not all the ſpecies preſented to it, ſo that our fitneſs to ſerve either God or Man is very much impaired. And yet notwithſtanding all the Boaſts of Chymiſts, and the ſingular and prudent management of Galeniſts, with the help of what medicines Nature or Art hath yet preſented, ſcarce one of a hundred hath proved a trophy of their Victory over ſo obſtinate a diſtemper; I mean not thoſe whoſe diſeaſe doth ariſe from any fault in the firſt waies, as children which have, wormes, or the nerves diſſeminated in the ſtomach, being affected with ill matter therein conteined, of which an eaſy way of cure doth effect the deſired end *viz.* By evacuating and diſcharging nature by Vomit

or Purges: but when the diſtemper hath its riſe from the head, and is of long continuance and duration; The way of cure I uſe is firſt generals as Bleeding, Vomits, or Purges ordinarily uſed in this caſe. Afterwards where the diſtemper is in the head originally; I uſe to cut off the hair, and uſe a fomentation of the ſpirit night and morning. As for internal remedies: ℞ *Caſſummuniar. pulv.* ʒii *Conſerv flor. Betonic.* ʒi *cum ſyrupo Pæon: q. s. fiat electuar. s. a. Capiat q. N. M. ter in die horis mediis ſuphibend.* ʒiiii *ſequentis. Julapii* ℞ *aq. florum tiliæ, ceraſor. nigr: an* ibs. *Spirit. Lavendul. Compoſit. Matth.* ʒiii. *ſyrup. Pæon. q. s. Miſce.* I ſhall not give Inſtances of thoſe many who have had their Fits hereby leſſened and abated, and very many cured. I could inſtance in a Gentlewoman, who had a concuſſion of her head, which ſhe laboured under for half a year in the Country, after a fall down ſtairs with her head foremoſt, coming up to *London* was cured by a decoction, and electuary made of this root, to mine, as well as her admiration, and liveth now free from any ill effects of that ill accident. I was called to a Gentlewoman that had hyſterick Fits with unuſual ſymptoms, accompanied with as great oppreſſions, and debility in her Spirits when her Fits went off, as when upon her, as ſhe apprehended. The Medicines uſed I find upon the file to have been only theſe: ℞ *Caſſummuniar. pulv.* ʒs *Conſerv. flor. boragin.* ʒi *cum ſyrup Pæon. q. S. M. fiat electuarium, capiat. q. N. M. ſuperbibend cockl.* viii *ſequent. Julapii.* ℞ *aq. atriplic.* ʒvi *pulg. ſpirit Lavend. compoſit. Mat. an* ʒi *M.* The common plaſter to the navil, and a nodul of *Galbanum*; in two hours her Fits ceaſed, and with the uſe of the ſame Remedies ſome few daies, ſhe was ſo far cured, that they have not returned

turned these twelve months, the occasion of the distemper not proceeding from any passions of the mind.

The Spirit of it drunk with black-cherry water every new, and full of the Moon, I conceive may be a soveraign preservative for them, who have had the common symptoms that are forerunners of that mortal disease the Apoplexy, or been once attacqued by it, and escaped it, for prevention of the second Fit, commonly mortal. To conclude this head; the greatefulness, as well as the usefulness of it, to prevent convulsions, looseness, and gripings in children, maketh me commend this medicine to Country Gentelwomen, to Midwives, and Nurses, and the rather because of its safety, and but one incovenience can attend the use of it, which is its binding quality, which is rarely a prejudice, where the Medicine discusseth wind, as this doth. They may boil it in their water-pap, their milk, or what else they think fit to give the child. I prefer it before any other Galenical or Chymical Medicine, for that I have observed, that by the nauseousness of spirit of Amber, and ill contexture, and consistency of Diascordium, Metridate, and *Venice*-treacle, they have oftentimes brought Fits instead of hindering them. The decoction of it in a little Ale, or Wine, and Water, is very useful for the Mother when layd, or boyled in her caudle to prevent Fevers, and after-pains, because it will promote sweat, and discuss wind.

The Griping of the guts, a disease no less torturing, than mortal, hath reigned exceedingly in *London* for these many years last past: and notwithstanding the endeavours of our learned Doctors, and ingenious Chymists, our bills of mortality inform us, that a great number of persons die of it every week, though more in,

July

July and *Auguſt* than at other ſeaſons of the year: This deſeaſe is many times Epidemical in the *Eaſt indies*, and this Root was ſent me with high commendations of the ſucceſsful uſe of it by the Brammenees in this malady, and indeed this remedy hath convinced me of the truth of Doctor *Willis*'s aſſertion, that the nervous part is principally affected in this diſtemper. By the excrements it is diſtinguiſhed into the bloody and unbloody Flux, in the latter, the matter is ſometimes wateriſh, and ſometimes mucous, to which may be added that which is called the dry Gripes. The method I proceed in all is alike: only where there is a Fever conjoyned with, or conſequent to the diſeaſe, I uſe Fountain-water for the vehicle. When called to a patient, bleeding being premiſed, if the age, temper of the patient, and ſeaſon of the year require it, I uſe Doctor *Sydenhams* purge. ℞ *Tamarind* ʒs *fol. ſennæ. mundat.* ʒii *Rhei* ʒiſs *coquantur in aq fontanæ q. s. Colatur. adde Mannæ, ſyrup. roſar. ſolutivi an.* ʒi *M. fiat potio.* At night when the purge hath done working, ℞ *rad. Rhyſagon. pulver.* ʒſs *cum ſyrup. corallior. q. s. fiat bolus hora ſommi ſumendus. Repetatur ſexta quaq; hora.* After it I give a large draught of the decoction of the ſame Root ſweetned with ſyrup of Couſlips, and ſometimes fifteen drops of the *Laudanum Liquidum* deſcribed by Doctor *Sydenham* in his excellent book of Obſervations upon acute Diſtempers. This Method I uſe till its declination to the better, and then the caſe is ſo eaſy, I need not inculcate any thing further about it.

Syden. Pag. 255.

I uſe this Root as a corrector of the inconveniences that attend the peruvian bark, and commonly preſcribe three parts of the bark, and one of the Root *Caſſummuniar.* And though I have alwaies after generals,

as

as the bitter potions, vomits, or bleeding as the caſe requireth, proceeded to the uſe of that bark, and that as frequently, as moſt have, having had the honour of many perſons of greateſt eminency in the Univerſity of *Oxford* one year under my care, together with many others ill of quartans, yet never can charge that bark in any one of my patients with any damage, which was the reſult of its adminiſtration, being thus corrected.

A very Eminent *Eaſt-india* Chyrurgion aſſured me, he had uſed this Root in Melancholy Hypocondriack, and the Scurvy, with great ſucceſs, of which I can ſpeak nothing from my own experience. I conceive that a decoction of this Root in Fountain-water, (ſeeing it ſtrengtheneth the animal ſpirits, helpeth ſeparation of what is inconvenient from them, promoteth Sweat, and a good circulation of the blood) may be of great uſe in Fevers, to prevent Deliriums, which hath frequently a fatal ill event attending it. I look upon it as a thing very probable, that this Root may be ſerviceable in many other diſeaſes, and do not doubt, but its own harmleſs, as well as uſeful nature will excite ingenious and learned Phyſitians (of which this Nation and City aboundeth in as many as any in the world,) to make a higher and greater improvement of it, than I have, or can. If what I have written may tend to the publick advantage, I have my end: and could wiſh, that all Phyſitians would ſo far conſult the good of mankind, as to communicate what they have ſingular to the world, that ſo noble a Science might be completed, and health be the better preſerved and reſtored: for that of *Seneca* is moſt true in Phyſick: *Multa egerunt, qui ante nos fuerunt, ſed non peregerunt, multum adhuc reſtat, multumque reſtabit, neque ulli nato poſt mille ſecula præcidetur occaſio aliquid adhuc adjiciendi.*

This

This root may be had at Mr. *Bartletts* Druggiſt in *Biſhopgate*-Sreet, or at my Apothecaries on *Rhederiff* wall. Mr. *Bartlett* hath as I ſuppoſe a ſufficient quantity for preſent uſe. And if it hath the deſired ſucceſs (of which do not doubt) I preſume more will be imported in a year or two.

FINIS.